(1)

His Most Sacred MAJESTIES,

And His Most Honourable

Privy Councils

LETTERS,

Relating to the

College of Physicians.

As likewise,

A SHORT ACCOUNT

Of the Institution, Use and Privileges of that

Royal Foundation.

By his Majesties Special Command.

LONDON,
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JAMES R.

TRusty and Well-beloved, We Greet you well. We *having lately Graciously given to you, the* President *and* Commonalty *of Our* College of Physicians *in* London, *Our Letters Patents, confirming all former Grants of Our Royal Progenitors, together with other Privileges, and more ample Authority, for suppressing all Illiterate and Illegal Practisers of the Art of* Physick, *in Our City of* London, *and seven Miles distance; We have thought fit, for the prevention of the great Damages and Inconveniences which our loving Subjects may be exposed to in their Healths, and otherwise, by the Unskilfulness of the said Practisers, to Will and Require You, the President and Censors of Our said College, and your Successors, in Pursuance of Our said Letters Patents, as also of the Laws and Statutes of Our Realm, forthwith to do your utmost Diligence to Prosecute and Suppress all such Unlearned and Unlawful Practisers of* Physick, *as shall presume to act contrary to Our said Letters Patents, and to the Laws of the Realm in that Case provided;* And, *for your Encouragement therein, We do require all our Judges, Justices of the Peace, and others whom it may concern,*

to Countenance and Assist you, the President *and* Censors, *in your Prosecution of such Offenders according to Law*: And *for the more effectual doing thereof, you are, as occasion shall offer, to demand the Aid and Assistance of the* Lord Mayor *and* Aldermen *of Our City of* London, *whom by Our Letters We have required to give you all Countenance and Assistance in the Execution of this Our Royal Will and Command; Not doubting, but that you will be careful to Suppress such Offenders, and Answer the Trust in this Case committed to you: And so We bid you farewell.* Given at Our Court at *Windsor*, the Third day of *July*, 1687. in the Third Year of Our Reign.

To our Trusty and Well-beloved, the *President* and *Censors* of Our College of *Physicians* in *London.*

By His Majesties Command,

Sunderland *P.*

JAMES

JAMES R.

TRusty and Well-beloved, We Greet you well. Whereas, *in the Reigns of Our Royal Progenitors of famous Memory, ſufficient Proviſion and Power hath been given and granted by ſeveral Charters and Acts of Parliament to Our College of* Phyſicians *in* London, *for the Reforming and Suppreſſing all Unlawful and Unlearned Practiſers of the Art of* Phyſick *in* London, *and within ſeven Miles diſtance thereof*; And, *We having of late in Our Princely Wiſdom, thought fit to confirm and enlarge the ſaid Charters of Our Royal Patent granted to the ſaid College; and reſolving to ſee the ſaid Charters and Acts of Parliament duly put in Execution, have thought fit by theſe Preſents to charge you, the* Lord Mayor, Aldermen, *and* Juſtices of the Peace, *within Our ſaid City and the Precincts thereof, that with all readineſs you do Aid and Aſſiſt the* Preſident *and* Cenſors *for the Time being, of Our ſaid College, or ſuch Officers as the* Preſident *of the ſaid College ſhall appoint, in the doing of all ſuch things, as by the ſaid Acts of Parliament or Charters ought to be done, for the Suppreſſing of all and every ſuch Perſon or Perſons, as contrary to the ſaid Royal*

Charters

Charters and Acts of Parliament shall dare to adventure in the Practice of Physick, *upon any of Our Subjects in the City of* London, *or the Suburbs and Precincts of the same* : And, *to the Intent, that this Our Purpose, tending to the Safety of Our Subjects, and the Suppression of Unlawful and Ignorant Practicioners, may with more Diligence and Authority be effected, We do Will and Command you, the* Lord Mayor *of Our City of* London, *that at your next Sessions, these Our Letters may be so read and published, that all Justices of the Peace, as well within Our said City, as also the Suburbs and Precincts of the same, may take knowlege of this Our Pleasure and Command : And so We bid you farewel.* Given at Our Court of *Windsor*, the Third day of *July*, 1687. and in the Third Year of Our Reign.

To the *Lord Mayor* of Our City of *London.*

By His Majesties Command,

Sunderland *P.*

Whereas

A ſhort Account of the Inſtitution and Nature of the College of Phyſicians, *London.*

THE College of Phyſicians in *London* (firſt Founded and Conſtituted by the Charter of King *Henry* VIII. in the Tenth Year of his Reign, and afterward confirmed and inlarged in its Privileges and Juriſdictions by ſeveral Acts of Parliament, and Charters granted by Himſelf and Royal Succeſſors,) conſiſts of a Preſident, Fellows, Candidates, Honorary Fellows, and Licentiates.

1. *The* FELLOWS

Are Doctors of Phyſick, choſen out of the Candidates, who have been always limited to a certain Number, and are now confined to the Number of Fourſcore, by His preſent Majeſties Gracious Charter: Out of theſe are choſen the Preſident, Elects, Cenſors, and other Officers of the College, who, with the reſt of the Fellows, are ſolely concerned in the Governing Part of the College, and have a Voice in the making and reſcinding any Statutes, Orders, or by-Laws, relating to Phyſick and the Practice thereof.

2. CANDIDATES

Muſt be Doctors in Phyſick, admitted to that Degree in one of our Own Univerſities, muſt not be Foreigners, and ought to

have practiſed Phyſick Four Years before they are admitted into that Order ; out of theſe, as the Seminary, the Fellowſhips are filled up, as they become vacant, in a perpetual Succeſſion.

3. *HONORARY FELLOWS*

Are ſuch Doctors in Phyſick, as by reaſon of their being Foreigners, or having taken their Degrees in ſome Univerſity beyond the Seas, are not incorporated into either of Ours ; or, for ſome other reaſon (having not been Candidates) are not of the Number of thoſe who have Votes in the Affairs of the College.

4. *LICENTIATES*

Are ſuch other Perſons Skilled in Phyſick, who by reaſon of their being Foreigners, or their not being admitted Doctors in one of Our Univerſities,or for their not being Eminently Learned, or by reaſon of their too great Youth, or ſuch like Cauſes, are not capable to be Elected into the Number of the Candidates ; yet may, notwithſtanding, be ſerviceable to the Publick in taking Care of the Health of the King's Subjects, at leaſt in ſome particular Diſeaſes.

NOW, of all theſe ſeveral Ranks and Degrees of Practiſers in Phyſick, none of them is confined to any certain Number but the Fellows and Candidates ; ſo that the Reſt being wholly unlimited, no Perſon can be excluded out of the College, or debarred from Practice, but ſuch as are ſo wholly illiterate and unskilful, that they dare not adventure to ſubmit themſelves to the Examination and Judgment of the Preſident and Cenſors of the College, either as to the Goodneſs of their Medicines, or their own Skill in all,or any Part of Phyſick ; though the Preſident and Cenſors be Men ſtrictly ſworn to do juſtice to

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all Persons, who shall present themselves, or their Medicines, to their Scrutiny and Examination.

From hence it manifestly follows, That the College of Physicians is very far from being a Monopoly, since it cannot reject any of the King's Subjects who are duly qualified for the Exercise of all, or any Part of Physick; and therefore, all Pretenders to Secret Medicines, or to the Practice of Physick, without Licence first had from the College, are justly prosecuted and punished as Publick Cheats and Impostors (conscious to themselves of Fraud in their Medicines, and Insufficiency in their pretended Skill in Physick) according to the just and wholsome Laws in that Case provided; For which purpose, and for the Incouragement of Legal and Learned Practicers in Physick, the College of Physicians is invested with several Powers and Privileges, partly by the expres Laws of the Land, and several Royal Charters; and partly by such Statutes and Orders of the College, as have been made in Pursuance thereof. An Account of some of which are here Printed, for the more Publick Information of all the King's Subjects, so that none may hereafter pretend Ignorance in these Matters.

1. The Censors of the College are intrusted with the Government, Scrutiny, Correction and Supervision of all Persons practising Physick within the City of *London*, and Seven Miles Compas, together with all their Medicines, Bills and Prescriptions whatsoever; so as that they may punish Offenders by Fines, Amerciaments, Imprisonments, and other reasonable Methods.

2. No Person in the Country (except Graduates in Physick in either of Our Universities) can have a License to practise Physick from the Lord Bishop of the Dioces, till he be first examined and approved by the President and Three Elects of

the College, and receive their Letters Teſtimonial for that Purpoſe.

3. All Perſons practiſing Phyſick in the City of *London*, and Seven Miles Compaſs, without Licence firſt had of the College of Phyſicians, after due Examination, whether meer Empiricks and Unlearned Perſons, or any other whatſoever, are to be proſecuted at Law, and upon Conviction to pay Five Pounds for every Months Practice proved againſt them; and, if they happen to be Apothecaries, may alſo (according to the ancient Practice, and laudable Cuſtom of the College, inforced by a former, as likewiſe by a late Statute) be diſcommun'd; ſo that no Member of that Society ought, upon Notice thereof, to ſuffer any of his Bills or Preſcriptions to be ſent to any ſuch Apothecary.

4. Any Perſon practiſing Phyſick Illegally, that is, without Licence firſt had from the College of Phyſicians, if his Patient ſhall happen to dye under his Hands, is indictable at Common Law for the Loſs of one of the King's Subjects.

5. Upon Complaint made by any Perſon to the Preſident and Cenſors againſt any Practiſer of Phyſick, within the City of *London*, and Seven Miles Compaſs, whether he be a Licenſed Phyſician or not, for having preſcribed any Unfitting or Unwholſome Medicine to his Patient; the ſaid Preſident and Cenſors have full Power and Authority to receive any ſuch Complaint, to ſummon the Perſon offending to appear before them at their Board; to ſummon, and examine Witneſſes, and to hear and determine the Matter; and, if the Perſon accuſed be found guilty of Ill Practice, they have Power to ſet a Fine upon him to any Summ not exceeding Twenty Pounds, and by the Warrant of the Cenſors to commit him to any Priſon of the City (except the Tower of *London*) till he ſhall have paid the

aforesaid Fine, and made due Submission to the College; so that all Persons who are injured in their Bodies and Healths by Unskilful Practisers, may there have certain and speedy Redress.

6. By the King's late Gracious Charter, the sole Power of Licensing all Books, Papers, &c. relating to Physick and Chirurgery, and the Practice thereof, is, after the Expiration of the Act of Printing, granted to the President and Censors of the College of Physicians; And, in the mean Time, is by them exercised by Favour of his Grace the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, who has been pleased to give them his Deputation for that Purpose; by which Means, frivolous and useless Books in Physick and Chirurgery, will for the future be in great measure Prevented, and the Scandalous Bills of Empiricks and Impostors in that Faculty stifled and suppressed.

7. Any Physician Licensed by the College, may exercise the Science of Physick in all and every of its Parts, any Act, Statute or Provision made to the contrary notwithstanding; so that he may, as often as he pleaseth, practise Chirurgery and Pharmacy, or the making and compounding Medicines for the Use of any of his Patients.

THESE are some of those Privileges and Powers, which the Royal Wisdom of our Princes, by their Charters and in their Parliaments, have thought fit to grant unto the College of Physicians, for the better Reformation of diverse Abuses and Enormities happening to the Common-wealth, by the evil using and undue Administration of Physick: And therefore, since the College was first Founded for that very Purpose, and afterwards (almost in every Princes Reign) strengthned and armed with fresh Powers and Authority to the same Intent; since all

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the Members of the College have given their Faith, or ſolemnly ſworn that they will do their utmoſt Endeavours to ſuppreſs all Illiterate and Illegal Practicioners; ſince not only by former Acts of Parliament, and Royal Charters, but alſo by that of His preſent Majeſty, and by his Particular Letters Mandatory we are ſtrictly commanded ſo to do: We ſhould be eminently guilty, not only of the greateſt Remiſsneſs, and moſt ſupine Negligence, but alſo of open Breach of our ſolemn Oaths and Faith, and manifeſt Diſobedience to our Prince, if we ſhould not exert the Authority committed to us, for the vindicating of the Practice of Phyſick out of the Hands of Ignorant Mechanicks, and other Illegal Invaders of that Liberal Faculty. And whereas, in all Trades and Corporations of this City, conſtituted for Private Benefit, not for Publick Uſe, and that by Charter only, not by the Statute-Laws of the Land, do without Blame or Envy inform againſt any Intruders, ſo as not to ſuffer any neighbouring Trade to break in upon them, but that by ſevere Mulcts and Fines conſtantly impoſed upon Offenders, they vigorouſly maintain their reſpective Bounds and Limits; It cannot be thought hard and unreaſonable in the College of Phyſicians alone (being conſtituted of men of generous and liberal Education, and inſtituted for Publick Benefit, confirmed not only by repeated Charters, but ſeveral Acts of Parliament, out of which no Perſon of ſufficient Capacity and Learning can be excluded) to aſſert its Own Conſtitution and Privileges, by legally puniſhing ſuch Perſons as ſhall boldly invade the Liberties of that Society; eſpecially, when ſo precious a thing as the Healths and Lives of the King's moſt eminent Subjects, reſiding in and about this City, are herein concerned. For the Diſcharge therefore of that Duty incumbent upon them, *viz.* to preſerve the Healthful State of the King's Subjects, *&c.*) the preſent College have taken all imaginable Care ſo to regulate the Practice of Phyſick, as that no Perſon may be neglected or

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aggrieved: The known Poor and Meaner Families are abundantly and prudently provided for, by a late Order for that Purpoſe. It is well known, that in Families of Middle Rank, the Phyſicians are moderate in their Expectations and Demands; and for thoſe that are Rich and Noble, Liberality is inſeparable from their Quality and Breeding. We are alſo fully reſolved, for the Publick Good, to incourage and protect thoſe two neceſſary Inſtruments of Phyſick, the Chirurgeons and the Apothecaries (the latter of which owe their Charter and Knowlege of Medicines to the Favour of the College) ſo long as they ſhall contain themſelves within the Limits of their own Profeſſions; and, in ſhort, to do all other things neceſſary for the vindicating and perpetuating of the Faculty of Phyſick, that ſo the Young Students in our Univerſities, may not be diſcouraged from applying themſelves to the Study of a Science, ſo uſeful to the Common-wealth; nor that Profeſſion be invaded by the Vulgar, which hath been the uſual Support of the Younger Sons of the Gentry of this Kingdom.

F I N I S.

FINIS.